



STATE OF MICHIGAN
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 19, 2006

TO: Independent, Political and Caucus Committees Registered on State Level

FROM: Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections

SUBJECT: UPCOMING FILING REQUIREMENTS

- The careful review of this memo is recommended to ensure that you are aware of the filings required of your committee.
- All Independent, Political and Caucus Committees registered on the state level that do not maintain a Reporting Waiver are required to file the January Campaign Statement due on January 31, 2007.
- An Independent, Political or Caucus Committee registered on the state level that (1) received or expended \$20,000. 00 or more in 2006 or (2) expects to receive \$20,000.00 or more in 2007 is required to file electronically. Committees may apply for MERTS Plus software on line at the MERTS Plus web site: www.mertsplus.com. Once a committee is required to file electronically, they must continue to file electronically even if they do not spend or receive \$20,000 in a future year.

January Campaign Statement

All Independent, Political and Caucus Committees registered on the state level that do not maintain a Reporting Waiver are required to file the January Campaign Statement due on January 31, 2007. The Campaign Statement is required even if the committee has no transactions to report for the period covered by the Campaign Statement.

The January Campaign Statement is not required of an Independent, Political or Caucus Committee registered on the state level that maintains a Reporting Waiver. Note that a Reporting Waiver maintained by an Independent, Political or Caucus Committee is lost if the committee receives or spends more than \$1,000.00 during the course of the year, has an account balance over \$1,000.00 or has over \$1,000.00 in debts.

Coverage Dates of Statement

The January Campaign Statement due on January 31, 2007 opens on the day after the "closing date" of the last Campaign Statement filed by the committee. If the committee has never filed a Campaign Statement, the January 31 Campaign Statement opens on the earlier of the following two dates: 1) the committee's formation date or 2) the date the committee accepted its first contribution or made its first expenditure.

The January 31, 2007 Campaign Statement covers through December 31, 2006.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE ENDING COVER DATE OF THIS CAMPAIGN STATEMENT IS DECEMBER 31, 2006. MAKE SURE IT ENDS ON 2006 AND NOT 2007.

Forms; Number of Copies Required

Forms for filing the January Campaign Statement are available on our website at www.michigan.gov/sos. The forms can also be obtained by contacting Irene Del Rio at the Michigan Department of State's Bureau of Elections. Phone: (517) 373-8612. Email: delrioi@michigan.gov.

When filing, one original copy of the January 31 Campaign Statement is required. Duplicate copies are not required.

File on Time!

If the committee raised **\$10,000.00 or less** during the previous 2 years, a \$25.00 late filing fee will be assessed each business day the Campaign Statement remains unfiled up to \$500.00. If the committee raised **more than \$10,000.00** during the previous 2 years, the maximum fee which can be assessed is increased to \$1,000.00.

- Electronic filings, sent via the Internet, must be transmitted and received by the Bureau of Elections by 5:00 p.m. on January 31, 2007.
- A Campaign Statement submitted by a committee required to file electronically will not be accepted unless filed by diskette or over the Internet.
- A January 31 Campaign Statement that is hand-delivered or sent by first class mail must reach this office before 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. Be sure to allow ample mailing time if sending first class.
- A January 31 Campaign Statement submitted on paper or diskette that is mailed by registered mail, certified mail or an overnight delivery service and postmarked on or before the filing deadline will be accepted as timely regardless of when it arrives.
- Be sure to fill out all forms as accurately as possible. Notices will be sent to the committee if forms are left off, figures are wrong, addresses are incorrect, etc. The committee is then required to file an amendment to correct the error.
- A Campaign Statement will not be accepted if it is illegible, does not bear a proper signature or is not the proper size. A Campaign Statement that is filed by diskette will not be considered filed if we are unable to load the disk.

Statement Of Organization Amendments Required With Campaign Statement

A committee registered under Michigan's Campaign Finance Act is required to amend its Statement of Organization if any information presented on the form changes. Required amendments to the form must be filed no later than the due date of the next upcoming Campaign Statement required of the committee. Therefore, if your committee is required to file the January 31 Campaign Statement, we urge you to review your committee's Statement of Organization before you file the Campaign Statement. If any information on the Statement of Organization has changed, be sure to file an appropriate amendment to the form no later than January 31, 2007. An amended Statement of Organization cannot be filed electronically.

If a committee has a Reporting Waiver and is not required to file Campaign Statements, amendments to the Statement of Organization may be filed anytime information on the form changes.

Identification Requirements

The Michigan Campaign Finance Act requires PAC's, Ballot Question Committees and Political Party Committees to include an identifying statement on printed matter and in paid radio or television advertisements. The following wording is recommended: "Paid for with regulated funds by (name and address of committee)."

MERTS Plus Software For Independent, Political and Caucus Committees

The following reminders are offered for Independent, Political and Caucus Committees using MERTS Plus software to electronically file Campaign Statements. **Questions concerning use of the software should be directed to MERTS Plus Tech Support at: (703) 749-4642 or sent by e-mail to mertstechsupport@nicusa.com.**

- **Election Cycles** – Make sure the correct election cycle(s) are entered into the Election Cycles Window. The election cycle for a candidate participating in the November 7, 2006 general election ends on November 7, 2006. For expenditures made after the November 7, 2006 general election to support or oppose candidates or issues, a new election cycle must be created for each candidate or ballot issue (Section 1.4 of the MERTS Plus Training Manual). The election cycle begins on the day after the last general election and ends on the day of the next general election.
- **Campaigns** – Make sure up to date campaign(s) are created in the Campaigns Window for each candidate or issue supported or opposed by the committee. For expenditures made after the November 7, 2006 general election to support or oppose candidates or issues, a new campaign must be created for each candidate or ballot issue (Section 1.5 of the MERTS Plus Training Manual).
- **Reporting Periods** – A separate report record (with correct coverage period dates) must be created in the Reports Window for each Campaign Statement that will be submitted by the committee electronically (Section 1.6 of the MERTS Plus Training Manual).
- **Amendments to Campaign Statements** – An amended Campaign Statement cannot be filed electronically until an original Campaign Statement has been filed electronically. If more than one amendment to a Statement has been created, each amendment must be electronically submitted in the order it was created.

Obtaining The MERTS Plus Software

State level committees wishing to obtain the MERTS Plus software may apply on-line at the MERTS Plus web site (www.mertsplus.com). Both on-site and on-line software training options are available. Access to the software is provided to committees that have completed the training session.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please phone us at (517) 373-2540 or write us at the address indicated below. The address below should also be used to mail your filing by first class mail, registered mail or certified mail.

Michigan Department of State
Bureau of Elections
Post Office Box 20126
Lansing, Michigan 48901-0726

If you would like to visit our office or use an overnight delivery service, the address below is provided.

Michigan Department of State
Bureau of Elections
Richard H. Austin State Office Building, 1st Floor
430 West Allegan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48918-1700

Enclosures: Campaign Statement Due Dates
Election Cycles Chart